114 today; if it provides ethnography with new materials; if it makes the native better known to missionaries, administrators, officers, colonists, and merchants, and thus better understood; and if cordial relations between the native and ourselves are thereby facilitated. Railroads will soon open up and profoundly modify the country. While there is still time, let us hasten to record the mentality of this people in its primitive form. We were able to gather data which we believe reflect the truth quite closely, thanks to the circumstances of our stay in Mossi country: ten consecutive years among its people, of which seven were spent in Koupéla; a knowledge of the language sufficient to maintain a running conversation on any subject whatever with the natives; and the close contact into which our ministry brought us with the village inhabitants. We shall be the first to acknowledge, however, that errors may have crept in here and there. It is very difficult to obtain a precise piece of information, and several natives questioned on the same subject often gave different answers. We were forced to make choices, and although we always tended to adopt the story which appeared to offer the greatest number of safeguards, we may have been wrong at times.

It must not be forgotten that our goal is not to provide a complete record of Mossi manners and customs. This was not possible, it would have been onerous, and we did not feel that it was necessary in order to present what we consider to be a generally accurate over-all picture of these people. Truthfulness compels us to point out that these materials were gathered for the most part in the province of Koupéla and, therefore, bear the impress of that locality. Our fellow-workers in Ouagadougou were kind enough to provide us with some information, but we were unable to obtain any data on the Yatenga region. God permitting, we shall round out these notes in a more comprehensive work.

101 Before we broach our subject, one remark is in order. It has be-
104 come usual to speak of the Mossi, of a Mossi, of the Mossi language, as though the word did not vary. We shall follow this custom and always write "Mossi" in the singular and in the plural, although the true name of this people is Moara, plural Mosé. Likewise, we have spelled geographical names in accordance with the practice of the Administration, so as to avoid the appearance of wishing to reform everything.

000 May we thank here all those from far and near who have helped us with this work, and especially those who have contributed the interesting photographs that illustrate it.

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GLOSSARY

BABISSI. Literally, "fathers' brothers." A large extended family (minimal lineage) composed of people who had a common ancestor three, four, or five generations back.

BAOLEBE. A group of bondsmen believed to be descended from the Fulani or from war captives.

BALOUM NABA. A provincial minister and the chief steward of the royal household.

BASKIA. Annual feast of the royal ancestors.

BENDERE NABA. A bard or minstrel who is often called upon to recite the ruler's genealogy at royal functions.

BOODKASMA (pl. BOODKASEMDAMBA). Head of a lineage or lineage segment.

COGANAMARSE. Stones on which dignitaries are seated during court ceremonies.

DAPORE. A group of bondsmen believed to be descended from war captives.

DIM (pl. DIMDAMBA). Literally, "submit only to God." King or king's son.

DOGUNBA. Literally, "keepers of the household." The younger wives of the ruler.

FADO. An inheritance tax.

GANDE NABA. An official charged with performing sacrifices on the ruler's behalf and with distributing gifts from the ruler to the royal officials and the royal household.

GOUNGA NABA. A provincial minister.

KAMBOINSE. Guards of the royal household.

KAMBO NABA. Head guard of the royal household.

KAMSAOGHO NABA. A provincial minister. He is also a eunuch.

KEEMA (pl. KEEMSE). Ancestral spirit; also, a deceased person.

KOMBERE OR KOMBERE NABA (pl. KOMBEMBA NANAMSE). A district chief.

KOS NABA. Collector of taxes on general merchandise sold in the market.

KOURITA (pl. KOURITADAMBA). A young son of a deceased Mogho Naba chosen to represent his father on earth. He is banned from the capital, and forbidden to see the new Mogho Naba under pain of death.

LARHALLE NABA. A provincial minister. He was also responsible for offering sacrifices to the royal ancestors.

MABISSI. Literally, "sons of the same mother." All the children of one woman.

MOAGA (pl. MOOSI). A member of the Mossi group or nation.

MOOHO. Literally, "the world." The country of the Mossi.

MOGHO NABA. Literally, "ruler of the world." The title of the ruler of the Ouagadougou kingdom.

NABA (pl. NANAMSE). Chief, ruler, or official.

NABA ZID OUENDE. Literally, "sun king." God.

NAS'YIRI. House of the chief or ruler.

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164 NAB'YURE. Literally, "king's name." No child born during his reign could bear the ruler's name, and those persons who already bore it when a new ruler was chosen called themselves Nab'yure.

NAKOMSE (sing. NABIGA). Children of the Naba; people of the ruling or noble class.

NAM. Sovereignty, which was conceived of by the Mossi as "that force of God which permits one man to control another."

NAMTIBO. The royal amulets, or any substance or object embodying the nam.

NAPOKO. Literally, "female ruler." The eldest daughter of a Mogho Naba. She ritually impersonates her deceased father during the interregnum.

NEMDO NABA. Collector of taxes on meat sold in the market, and the person responsible for distributing meat within the royal household.

NINISI, see TINGUIMBISSI.

OUAGADOUGOU NABA. The earth priest (Tengsoba) who had ritual control of the capital district.

OUEDRANGE NABA. Head groom of the royal stables.

OUIDI NABA. An official of the ruler. In Ouagadougou, he was both a provincial minister and the prime minister.

POGOPOSSUM. Premarital gift from a man's family to his wife's family.

PUGHSIUDSE. Women whom the chief received from his subjects and whom he subsequently gave out as wives on condition that their husbands give him their eldest daughters as future pughsiudse.

PUGHTIEMA. Head wife of a ruler.

PWE NABA. A religious practitioner in a ruler's household; he is responsible for the virtue of the ruler's wives and pages.

RAGA NABA. Official in charge of the market.

SAKA (pl. SAGHSE). A section of a village.

SAKAKASMA (pl. SAKAKASMADAMBA). Head of a village section; usually the senior man of the senior lineage segment in the village.

SAMANDE (pl. SAMANDE-KAMBA). A servant in the royal household or the chief's household.

SAMANDE KASMA. Head retainer in a ruler's household.

SAMANDE NABA. Official in charge of palace retainers.

SEKA (pl. SEGHSE). Compulsory labor performed for a ruler by his subjects.

SIMILI-MOSSI. An ethnic group formed through the intermarriage of the Fulani and the Mossi.

SOGHONE (pl. SOGHONDAMBA). A page in the ruler's household.

SOGHONE-KASANGA. Head page.

SOLEM. Kingdom or area ruled by the Mogho Naba.

SOSOGHA (pl. SOSOSE). Voluntary labor performed for a ruler by his subjects.

TANSOBA. War minister.

TENGA (pl. TENSE). Generalized female earth deity. Tenga had local manifestations called Tengkouga, or earth shrines. The Mossi talk about these shrines as though they are deities in their own right.

TENGKOUGA (sing. TENGKOUGSE). Earth shrines, including mountains, rivers, clumps of trees, etc. See TENGA.

TENGKOM. Civil war between villages or districts.

TENGSOBA (pl. TENGSOBADAMBA). Earth priest.

TINGUIMBISSI. Literally, "sons of the earth." The autochthonous population of Mossi country; also called Ninisi.

WEOGHO (pl. WEOTO). Wasteland or uncultivated land.

YAGENGA (pl. YAGENSE). Literally, sister's son. The son or grandchild of a female lineage member.

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YIRI (pl. YIYA). A Mossi household.
YIRISOBA (pl. YIRISOBADAMBA). Head of a household.
YUMA (pl. YUMBA). Herald or musician.
ZAKA (pl. ZAGHSE). Interior courtyard of a compound.
ZOM KOM. A beverage made with millet flour and water. Sometimes honey is added.
ZONGACONGO. War drum.
ZONGO. Reception hall of a ruler.
ZUSOABA KASANGA. Head eunuch.